

WEB-BASED FACTORY MANUFACTURING OF COMPUTERS IN A BUILD-TO-ORDER MANUFACTURING ENVIRONMENT

Abstract of Disclosure

5 One embodiment is a system and method for facilitating factory-installation of software in a build-to-order ("BTO") manufacturing environment using a web-based software distribution system. Subsequent to physical assembly, the minimum software required for a computer to boot up and operate and connect to the Internet is installed on the hard drive thereof. Upon initial boot-up of the computer, a "Web-Based Install" ("WBI") icon is displayed on the desktop interface element thereof. Clicking on this icon causes the computer to be connected to a secure website of the computer manufacturer ("Internet boot facility"). An ID number identifying the particular computer is then automatically provided to the Internet boot facility and a page including a list of all of the software for which the customer purchased for the 10 identified computer is displayed to the customer. The customer may select one or more programs to be downloaded to and installed on the computer by clicking on the associated link(s) or icon(s). Alternatively, rather than a WBI icon, icons for each of the purchased software packages are displayed on the desktop interface element thereof when the computer is first booted. Clicking on an icon causes the 15 computer to connect to the Internet boot facility, and, after the computer is identified thereto, downloading and installation of the software identified by the icon is performed. Alternatively, the download and installation process is initiated immediately and automatically when the computer is first booted.

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